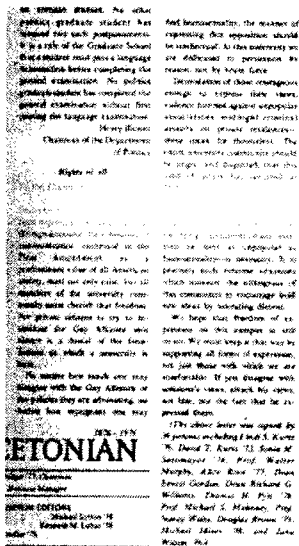




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Letter to the Editor: Criticizing an anti-gay attack on campus (Feb. 27, 1976)

By DAILY PRINCETONIAN STAFF
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Created by Staff

This letter to the editor, published in the Feb. 27, 1976, edition of The Daily Princetonian, was written in response to an incident six days before, when eight students ransacked the dorm room of two gay students who were members of the Gay Alliance of Princeton. The letter was signed by 39 individuals, including Sonia Sotomayor '76, history professor Nancy Weiss (now Dean of the College) and politics professor Walter Murphy.

Rights of all**To the Chairman:**

A university is an institution dedicated to the pursuit of truth, to open inquiry, to exchange of ideas through discourse. Here freedom of communication, enshrined in the First Amendment as a predominant value of all American society, must not only exist, but all members of the university community must cherish that freedom. For private citizens to try to intimidate the Gay Alliance into silence is a denial of the foundations on which a university is built.

No matter how much one may disagree with the Gay Alliance or the policies they are advocating, no matter how repugnant one may find homosexuality, the manner of expressing this opposition should be intellectual. At this university we are dedicated to persuasion by reason, not by brute force.

Intimidation of those courageous enough to express their views, violence directed against unpopular associations, midnight criminal assaults on private residences — these speak for themselves. The entire university community should be angry, and disgusted, that this kind of action has occurred at Princeton.

But a negative response to the violence is not enough. A *positive* response — a university-wide support for the right to dissent on *any* issue — is necessary. It is precisely such extreme situations which measure the willingness of this community to encourage bold new ideas by tolerating dissent.

We hope that freedom of expression on this campus is still intact. We must keep it that way by supporting all forms of expression, not just those with which we are comfortable. If you disagree with someone's views, attack his views, not him, not the fact that he expressed them.

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